

April 25, 2024

## Love God, Love Others

[1 John 4:7-11](#)

<sup>9</sup> *This is how God showed his love among us: He sent his one and only Son into the world that we might live through him. <sup>10</sup> This is love: not that we loved God, but that he loved us and sent his Son as an atoning sacrifice for our sins. <sup>11</sup> Dear friends, since God so loved us, we also ought to love one another.*

As I write this devotional, it's not too far from Valentine's Day, and love has been in the forefront for a while now. What better time to contemplate this scripture that uses some form of the word love eleven times in just five verses?

I think John uses this repetition to show the breadth and expanse of God's extravagant love and to convey the importance of loving one another. This passage starts with a directive and explanation that we are to love one another because love comes from God.

It's in verse 8 where it becomes evident that we still have so much work to do. *"Whoever does not love does not know God, because God is love."*

Can you think of times you didn't love? I know that I can. I'm not saying it's easy to love one another as John tells us in this passage. We all know people who are hard to love; people who have hurt us or hurt those we care for; people who have made poor choices or shown poor judgment.

If it were easy, I think John may not have needed to remind us *eleven times* in five verses to love. But he gives us the most compelling reason of all to love one another: He showed that God loved us so much that he sent his Son to atone for our wrongdoings and shortcomings.

At the beginning of the year, my friends and I started an online Bible plan, and we've been re-reading those first books of the Bible, marveling at how many times the Israelites complained, disobeyed, and rebelled against God. So it's fresh in my mind that they angered God so much, that he nearly destroyed them time and time again.

But he loved even them so much, that he still sent Jesus into the world so they could live and not die. And he loves even you that much, and even me. So just as John says in verse 11, I'll say to you, "Dear friends, since God so loved us, we also ought to love one another."

**Prayer:** *Heavenly Father, thank you for loving us so extravagantly. Help us remember that we should extend that same grace-filled love to all, even them – all of them. Help us know you more, because to know God is to love God, and loving God means loving others. In Jesus' name, Amen.*

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